FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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EXCISE

SECURITY: CONFIDENTIAL PRIORITY: AIR POUCH

TO: Department of State 714.00/2-2050

FROM: SAN JOSE 210 February 20 1950

REF:

SUBJECT: Guatemalan Ambassador's Reply to Press Articles by Fitzhugh TURNER.

REVIEWED BY DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/HR DATE 3 OCT 80

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During the course of the past eight or ten days the local press has published a series of articles by Fitzhugh TURNER commenting upon political conditions in Guatemala. On February 18 the various San José newspapers received a communication from the Guatemalan Ambassador, Francisco VALDES Calderón, commenting upon the Turner articles and enclosing a copy of a press release of February 14 issued by the Guatemalan Ministry of Foreign Affairs replying in part to the allegations made by Turner in his HERALD TRIBUNE articles and making certain allusions tending to demonstrate that perhaps the United States was more involved in the Caribbean Legion than was Guatemala. One of these references was that a United States Army Officer had been decorated by the Caribbean Legion for his work in the revolution in Costa Rica.

The Guatemalan Foreign Office's knowledge of the activities and plans of the Caribbean Legion at various points in its development should have been so complete as to demonstrate that its allusion to the Legion's having decorated the United States Army Officer was incorrect. In fact, the connection between various officers of the Legion and the Guatemalan Embassy was so close that on one occasion that Embassy sent out official invitations to a reception to be given in the Embassy residence by the officers of the Caribbean Legion. This reception was attended, entirely against the wishes of the Embassy which were made quite clear [redacted]. Some months later, and immediately prior to his departure from Costa Rica, [redacted] was given a luncheon by the officers of the "Army of National Liberation" and presented with a gold medal. As Costa Rica does not have any official decorations the medal was in testimony of the esteem in which the [redacted] had been held by the various military figures of the revolutionary period. That some of them were also members of the Legion was coincidental.

In referring to the Fitzhugh Turner articles, Lic. Valdés Calderón said, in part: " ... He endeavors to create doubts and suspicions against the crystal clear principles of the Guatemalan Revolution which was fundamentally inspired in the new Rooseveltian doctrine of social betterment for our peoples. The eye is struck from his articles by the sentiment of 'Yankeephile', of a return to the discredited, criminal, and anti-Americanist doctrine supported, maintained, and tenaciously

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developed by the old Republican Party of the United States, the policy of the dollar, of crime and of imposition against our countries of Latin America, defending all those actions of ruin and exploitation of the large American trusts in our countries. Fortunately today the United States and the countries - but listen well - the countries of our Hispanic America now understand one another in a different manner, heart to heart, in defense of the mutual and great interests of the spirit ... In his injudicious articles Turner can only establish a great truth: that Arevalo is an idealist of the left with a great practical sense and even his enemies realize that he is sincerely devoted to the social betterment of Guatemala. Fortunately for our countries which have been victims of unbrindled and ambitious 'Saxonism', there are many and very well-read intellectual authors and writers who continue to do justice to our Revolution, analyzing it from the fair and true standpoint with which writers and thinkers should look upon the social problems of today without being obliged, as does Turner, not to accept the truth and the necessity of raising up our proletariat and farming classes to the level of life which should be theirs, the teaching of which has been left to us in the writings of the Creator of the Universe."

Scriptural precepts do not always seem to have been followed by Lic. Valdés Calderón. A member of the Embassy staff was informed on February 18 by [redacted] B1,E that the Government has definite evidence that Lic. Valdés Calderón was directly implicated in the assassination of Colonel ARANA. [redacted] B1,E on the basis of that evidence, had at first wished to declare the Ambassador persona non grata but had refrained from doing so when it was learned the Ambassador might possibly be returning to Guatemala as has now B1,EB been announced. [redacted] remarked that Valdés Calderón had attempted to influence and advise the Government as he had done during the [redacted] had B1,E made it evident that his advice was not welcome.

It is understood that Lic. Valdés Calderón is returning to Guatemala during the course of the present week.

For the Ambassador:

Andrew E. Donovan II

Andrew E. Donovan II
First Secretary of Embassy

Copy to Amembassy, Guatemala.

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